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Griffins showcase skills during Best Warrior Competition

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KATTERBACH, Germany – The Griffin brigade's finest brought their A game to the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade Best Warrior Competition held June 29 at Oberdachstetten Training Area.

Sixteen high-speed Soldiers and noncommissioned officers from throughout the ranks of the brigade's headquarters company and seven battalions battled for the title of the 12th CAB Solider or NCO of the Year during the nearly 15-hour competition.

The victors were Staff Sgt. Kenneth Moore, 2-159th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, and Spc. David Loaiza, of A Company, 412th Aviation Support Battalion. The two will participate in the U.S. Army Europe-level Best Warrior Competition in late July.

"It feels great to represent my battalion and company ... winning this competition took hard work, dedication and training. I'm all about putting heart and soul into things, no matter how tired, you have to keep going," said Loaiza, an Army truck driver and a native of Queens, N.Y.

Although Moore and Loaiza conquered the challenge, each competitor was lauded for their efforts.

"All of you were selected by your battalions to be here, and that makes you all the best in my book," said Command Sergeant Major Mike Clowser, 12th CAB command sergeant major.

"As a sergeant major, I look at what Soldiers are doing to challenge themselves ... and these Soldiers are great Americans who are rising to the occasion and exceeding expectations," Clowser said.

Clowser and Col. Van J. Voorhees, Jr., the brigade's new commander, geared up and joined the competitors in a 4-mile ruck march event. Voorhees told the Soldiers he enjoyed getting away

from the “head shed” to partake in the kind of Soldier tasks that he enjoyed during his earlier days in the Army.

“This is the most fun I’ve had in several years ... there’s nothing like being around troops who want to be here,” Voorhees said. “I can’t tell you how proud I am ... you inspire me.”

The competition included a physical fitness test, a 4-mile ruck march, weapon assembly and qualification, a rough terrain course, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear skills, medical skills, a written test, interaction with the media and a board.